Demonstration Project Assistance

Description
The Demonstration program is a flexible and broadly defined program that invests in projects designed to: improve the efficiency of public transportation providers in all functional areas; offer creative approaches to identify and access public transportation markets; increase private sector involvement in all areas of public transportation; and raise the utilization and productivity of existing public transportation services. DRPT recognizes that two specific areas of increasing need within this program are technology, and safety and security. Technology can be applied to public transportation in many ways including but not limited to:

1. Passenger amenities such as Wi-Fi on vehicles, real-time passenger information systems, computerized trip planning systems, and automated stop announcement systems.
2. Fundamental technology infrastructure such as data communications systems and automated vehicle location systems.
3. Tools and systems to enhance public transportation operations such as mobile data terminals, computer aided dispatch systems, vehicle warning systems and asset maintenance/ management systems.

Safety and security items include but are not limited to: safety and security plans, vulnerability assessments, vehicle based surveillance systems, facilities based surveillance systems, fencing, building access, silent alarms and lighting.

Eligible Recipients
Eligible grant recipients include technology projects sponsored by:
- Local and State Government
- Transportation District Commissions
- Public Service Corporations
- TDM/Commuter Assistance Agencies

Eligible Expenses
Eligible expenses include the following:
- Administrative net costs (personnel, office supplies, travel, marketing and advertising)
- Capital costs for equipment and materials
- Operating costs (wages, supplies, maintenance, purchased services)
- Costs to conduct planning studies that are system wide or issue specific and/or develop concept of operations documents or systems engineering requirements

Match Ratio and Limits of Funding
Demonstration Project Assistance is typically funded at the maximum state ratio of 95 percent. The funding for this program comes from the Special Projects fund, which includes funding for DRPT's Demonstration Assistance, Technical Assistance and Intern Programs.
The amount of funding spent from the Special Projects fund for each one of these programs

varies each year depending upon needs; however the total amount of funding for Special Projects is consistently in the range of $2 million.

Application Evaluation Process

Demonstration Project Assistance applications will be evaluated by DRPT using the following criteria:

- Project Justification – explanation of the need/problem that the project will address
- Planning – documentation that sufficient planning has been conducted to execute the project (not necessary if the application is for preparing a plan or concept of operations) and demonstration that the Systems Engineering Process is being utilized (for technology projects)
- Project Scope – approach to addressing the need/problem (for technology projects; apply systems engineering process)
- Project Readiness – ability to initiate and substantially complete the capital elements of the project within the fiscal year the funds are being applied for
- Technical Capacity – identification of project management team and ability to execute the project
- Project Budget – ability to execute the project scope within the proposed project budget and demonstration that sufficient consideration has been given to ongoing operating and maintenance costs
- Project Schedule – ability to execute the project scope within the project schedule
- Monitoring and Evaluation Plan – approach to measuring performance and evaluating the results of the project

Upon completion of the evaluation process, DRPT includes the recommended applications and allocation in the Draft Six Year Improvement Program. The CTB approves the release of the draft program to the public for comment and following receipt of public comments, the CTB approves the final Six Year Improvement Program.

Application Procedure

Applications for all State Aid Grant Programs are submitted online using DRPT's On-Line Grant Application system (OLGA) at: https://olga.drpt.virginia.gov.

Required data include:

- Contact information (including Project Manager)
- Project justification
- Planning documentation (including cost estimation methodology)
- Project scope
- Project budget
- Project schedule/FTA required milestones
- Project readiness
- Monitoring and evaluation plan

The application process for the Demonstration Assistance Program is summarized in the State Aid Grant Program Calendar in Section 3

In order to ensure that local matching funds will be available for all applications recommended by DRPT for funding, a certification from the Chief Executive Officer of the entity applying for funding must be submitted to DRPT in May prior to the development of the Final Six Year Improvement Program.   DRPT will provide future guidance on the form of the certification.